



**Students' Association
Film and Television Institute of India,
Law College Road,
Pune: 411004**

Pune
09-07-2015

PRESS STATEMENT

On the 28th day of the strike, FTII students held a Press Conference to share some important details with the media. The same have been detailed below.

Yesterday it was brought to our notice that the interview for the Director's post will be conducted on the 13th of July, as the term of the current Director is set to end soon. The recently appointed Chairman, Mr. Gajendra Chauhan will be heading the selection panel. Since the students are protesting the appointments of the Chairman and a few other members in the FTII society, any appointments and policy decisions taken by a panel that comprises of the members in question is unacceptable. We propose that the currently appointed FTII society be kept in a state of suspended animation, till a mutually acceptable solution is achieved to address our legitimate demands.

The recent resignation by Jahnu Barua, Pallavi Joshi & Santosh Sivan from the Society, validates our stand. It shows that the larger film community realizes the relevance of our concerns, and stands in support of the students. Here, it's imperative to reiterate that we are on strike to question the selection criteria by which the aforementioned members were chosen. We hold no opposition to the individuals and only to their questionable appointment in the FTII Society. Therefore, along with Mr. Chauhan, the academic and artistic credentials of Ms Anagha Ghaisas, Mr. Narendra Pathak, Mr. Rahul Solapurkar and Mr. Sailesh Gupta are equally questionable.

We are being criticized for wasting tax payers' money by waging a futile strike. But it is precisely because the students respect and feel accountable not only to the tax payer but to every citizen of the country, that we continue to strike. We strike to keep this institute accessible for students from all classes, castes, region, language, ideology and culture. We strike to ensure that all voices are heard and respected in the running of this institute. We strike to ensure that democracy stays alive in FTII. This is our responsibility and we owe it, not only to the future students but also to the nation at large.

We would also like to clarify that the claim of FTII being witness to 39 strikes is baseless. The students researched and found that till date only six strikes have been called for, making ours the seventh in total. The repeated apathy of the administration regarding many internal issues of syllabi, classes, infrastructure, faculty, has forced students in the past to protest. Here, we ask the media to be more responsible and discern the difference between a protest and a strike. These rumors can only be read as tactics to distract attention from the current core issue for which the strike has been called. It also discourages healthy discourse among students, the direct stakeholders in any educational institute. Such uninformed accusations reduce responsible students to mere rebels.

Yesterday in a panel discussion aired on a major News Channel, Mr Mukesh Khanna, the Chairman of Children's Film Society argued that FTII is a government run institute and it is their prerogative to appoint people of their choice. If the students have a problem, they should leave. While not challenging the Government's right, we see this irresponsible statement as a direct attack on the democratic rights of students and the people of this country. We have elected this government and we hold the right of information and explanation from our elected representatives. We hold utmost respect for the office they occupy but such blatant statements are unacceptable. We demand an immediate apology from Mr. Khanna, who is requested not to abuse the dignity the country expects of him as the representative of a crucial government agency.

Students' Association, FTII

Youtube- ftiistudentsbody@gmail.com,

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/FTII-Wisdom-Tree>